(b) The lion population has grown from 239 in May, 1985 to 304 in May, 1995.

(c) and (d) An area of 1412.12 sq. km. of the Gir forest which is the habitat of lions, has been constituted into a protected area under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The Asiatic Lion is fully protected against hunting and commercial exploitation. Habitat protection and management activities such as habitat improvement, water conservation, wildlife health monitoring etc., are also undertaken. Under in situ conditions, breeding takes place if favourable conditions are available to the lions. No artificial breeding programme is necessary. As a result of these measures, the population of Asiatic Lions has gradually increased from 177 in 1968 to 304 in 1995.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. After detailed scientific investigations the Kuno-Palpur sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh was selected for establishing a second free-ranging population of the Asiatic lion. The project will be implemented over a 8-10 year period. At present in the first phase, preliminary habitat and prey base development and eco-development works are being undertaken and actual shifting of some lions will take place in the second phase, which will start around the year 2000.

[English]

Open Sale of Wheat and Rice by FCI

1025. SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the quantity of wheat and rice sold by FCI under the open sale scheme to mill owners and the small traders during each of the last two years;

(b) whether the Government are aware that the mill owners made bulk purchase and small traders could not avail of the benefit of the scheme;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take to ensure that small traders also get the benefit of this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUVANS PRASAD SINGH) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected from Food Corporation of India and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Justice for the Victims of Negligence

1026. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the legal report captioned "No justice for victims of negligence" appearing in the 'Times of India' dated June 17, 1997 pointing out the inadequacy of law for punishing the guilty for blatent negligence, where delay in the process dictates the force of law;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether the Government propose to amend the law and procedure evolving a well studied law of torts; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) tc (d) The section 304A of the Indian Penal Code provides for punishment for causing death by negligence. At present there is no proposal to amand the law as the existing penal provisions are quite adequate.

Pollution Measures

1027. SHRI KESHAB MAHANTA : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of air and water pollution measures adopted by the Fertilizers plant of H.F.C. Namrup;

(b) whether the Government are aware that inadequate attention paid by the fertilizer plants in controlling the air and water pollution;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to ensure the control of air and water pollution by the fertilizer plants?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) The following air and water pollution control measures have been undertaken by the Namrup I, II & III units of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. (HFC)

(i) Conversion of the Sulphuric acid plant in Namrup I unit to Double Conversion Double Absorption (DCDA) system.